

Summary Fortification Creek Scoping Comments (Scoping period closed June 23)

Fifty comment letters were received. The breakdown is as follows:

Agencies	2	Fish and Wildlife Service
		WY Game and Fish
NGO's (environmental)	10	The Wilderness Society
		Wyoming Wilderness Association
		Sierra Club
		Alliance for Historic Wyoming
		Clark Resource Council
		Biodiversity Conservation Alliance
		Powder River Basin Resource Council
		Wyoming Outdoor Council
		National Wildlife Federation and State Chapter
		Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
NGO's industry	2	American Gas Association
		Petroleum Association of Wyoming
Individuals	36	Total
	(4)	Landowners within the SMA
	(13)	Local (Gillette, Sheridan, Buffalo)
	(29)	Wyoming
	(2)	Out of state

In general, the majority of those who commented were opposed to the development. Sierra Club and Biodiversity Conservation Alliance both published action pages on their web sites which about half of the individual comments appeared to be derived from.

Twenty-four of the responses specifically stated that an EIS should be conducted instead of an EA including the FWS and the WY Game and Fish Dept. Though many of those making this statement did not elaborate as to why, several made specific reference to the CEQ significance criteria they felt applied based upon perceived impacts (uniqueness of the prairie elk herd, controversial nature relative to uncertainty of effects to the elk herd etc.). Several also commented about the inadequacy of the analysis in the PRB EIS relative to affects to elk and stated that because of the inadequacy, we could not effectively tier to the EIS. They also pointed out this approach of scoping for seven PODs as piece-mealing suggesting that all the proposed PODs in the SMA should be analyzed at once to fully disclose direct, indirect and cumulative effects.

The primary issue identified was wildlife and in particular elk.

Issues specifically raised about elk included:

- Loss of security habitat
- Loss of habitat effectiveness, road density and amount of traffic (in particular crucial and partrition range)

- Herd viability
- Habitat fragmentation
- Effect upon quality of hunting experience
- Increased potential of the herd being affected by West Nile virus
- Increased potential for poaching
- Current seasonal restrictions may not be adequate

Other Wildlife Issues

- **Effects to sage grouse especially in light of Dr. Naugle's new information.**
Loss of habitat, increased levels of selenium
- **Effects to most other species as already discussed in the PRB EIS including TE&S.**

Other Issues

- **Pre-leasing analysis inadequate**
- **Loss of wilderness character in the WSA relative to the ROW access to state land.**
Can't meet non-impairment interim management requirement.
- **Affects to the integrity of the proposed ACEC**
Not maintaining the relevance and importance criteria as stated in the PRB ROD.
- **Ineffectiveness of reclamation as seen in similar settings in the basin in areas with shallow soils and steep topography**
- **Effects upon the visual qualities of the area primarily from roads and power lines.**
- **Infestation of noxious weeds into a relatively weed free area.**
- **Road surfacing relative to dust and safety**
- **Need to supply greatest amount of access to gas supply**
- **Erosion problems from impoundment failures.**
- **Action not in conformance with the RMP**
- **Effects to cultural, historic and paleologic resources**
- **Development within the SMA would compromise the character of the Citizens Wilderness Proposal**
- **Water quality into the Powder River**
- **Livestock crossings on Fortification Creek**

Possible Process Issue

- **Scoping Notice - Not sufficient enough scope provided for cumulative effects**
Geographic scope of effects by resource and total potential development.

A number of suggested mitigation measures and alternatives were made. The following are a sample.

- **Canceling or exchanging leases in crucial and parturition elk ranges**
- **No facilities in the crucial and parturition ranges**

- **No overhead power**
- **Companies acquire access for the public**
- **Should gravel roads with pit-run gravel instead of scoria**
- **Should use existing pads where possible**
- **Consider closed loop drilling**
- **Require directional drilling**
- **Should consider phased development (One POD at a time)**
Argues it is allowed under SLTs.
- **Drill replacement water wells for landowners prior to development**
- **Follow game and fish guidance for minimum mitigation to conserve crucial winter range**

1	Brent and Jill Sorenson	owns property in the SMA	Arvada, WY
2	Nada Culver	The Wilderness Society	Denver, CO
3	William Edwards		
4	Liz Howell	Wyoming Wilderness Assoc.	Sheridan, WY
5	Steve Martin		Powell, WY
6	Tom and Nancy McCoy		Clark, WY
7	Christian Rudolph		Boulder, CO
8	Bob Laybourn		Cheyenne, WY
9	Heath & Jennifer Benike		Colfax, WI
10	Jason A. Lillegraven		Laramie, WY
11	Barnes, Margaret		Gillette, WY
12	Tom & Sara Neyer		Gillette, WY
13	Jim Laybourn		Jackson, WY
14	Charleen Beach		Laramie, WY
15	Kirk Koepsel	Sierra Club	Sheridan, WY
16	Martha Roberts		Thermoplolis, WY
17	Jack Highfill		Newcastle, WY
18	Jim & Jodi Verplanke		Buffalo, WY
19	Barbara Dobos	Alliance for Historic Wyoming	Casper, WY
20	Steve Yenko		
21	Charles R. Neal		Cody, WY
22	Andy Blair		Lander, WY
23	E. Heyward		Sheridan, WY
24	Deb Thomas	Clark Resource Council	WY
25	Albert Bitner		Cheyenne, WY
26	Kim Johnson		Wilson, WY
27	Michael Weber		Sheridan, WY
28	Mark Salvo		Chandler, AZ
29	Patty Myers		Gillette, WY
30	Sherri Mullinnix		Douglas, WY
31	The Wilson's		Sheridan, WY
32	Jim Ryan		Jackson, WY
33	Mark Jenkins		Laramie, WY
34	Kristin Belko		Lander, WY
35	Melissa Murphy Ziery		Laramie, WY
36	Dottie Tillotson		Afton, WY
37	Kathleen Hollcroft		Arvada, WY

38		Wyoming Game and Fish Department	Cheyenne, WY
39		U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Cheyenne, WY
40	Eric Molvar	Biodiversity Alliance	Laramie, WY
41	Pamela Lacey	American Gas Association	Washington, D.C.
42	Jill Morrison	Powder River Basin Resource Council	Sheridan, WY
43	Bruce Pendrey	Wyoming Outdoor Council	Logan, Utah
44	Ken Burton	owns property in the SMA	Buffalo, WY
45	Margret Sorenson	owns property in the SMA	Buffalo, WY
46	Shawn and Holly Marsh		Gillette, WY
47	John Robitaille	PAW	Casper, WY
48	Michael Saul	National Wildlife Federation	Boulder, CO
49	Steve Belinda	Teddy Roosevelt Conservation Part.	Boulder, CO
50	Nick Centrella		